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MR. GUNTHER'S COLUMBUS.

MR. C. F. GUNTHER, of Chicago, has had printed a very neat prospectus upon his portrait of Columbus, which he claims to have been painted by Antonio Moro, and to be the only authentic portrait of the explorer in existence. The reproduction of the picture in the prospectus represents a man of the early middle age richly dressed, with lace ruffs and collar, at half length. It is claimed by Mr. Gunther that the picture was executed circa 1543-45, from miniatures of the subject painted from life of the Spanish Court. The portrait was engraved as a frontispiece to WASHINGTON Irving's "Columbus," edition of 1850, and he wrote of it: "The portrait of Columbus prefaced to the present volume, is from a beautiful picture painted by Sir Anthony Moro for Margaret, Governess of the Netherlands. It was brought to this country about the year 1590, and has been in possession of one family until very recently, when it was purchased by Mr. Cribb, of King street, Covent Garden, London. The characteristics of the mind and features of Columbus are so forcibly depicted in this picture that no doubt can remain but that it is a true and perfect resemblance of the great navigator." Mr. Gunther publishes the following reasons why his must be the only authentic portrait of the great navigator:

FIRST.—All other portraits have a mythical history, with no positive foundation for their alleged authenticity.

SECOND.—Upon examination of the majority of the alleged portraits of Columbus it will be seen that all of the artists in executing these works had for their Columbus ideal a face and form with the plasticity of the priest, poet, writer, musician, or man of some other sedentary occupation. Not one of them possesses the characteristics so strong in Moro's work. In fact, this portrait admirably portrays the face and form of a sailor—the features of a man full of vigor and ambition. The face is handsome, robust, daring—one of determination and zeal—and the only one in which any artist seeking Columbus honors has brought out the characteristics of a true-born sailor and navigator, such as Columbus was.

THIRD.—The Gunther Columbus is one of the few portraits upon which the name of the subject appears. Painted under the finish on the upper left-hand corner of the panel is the inscription "Ch. Colombo," from the brush of Moro.

FOURTH.—This portrait was painted by one of the greatest masters of his time, who painted at the Court of Philip II of Spain, for the Emperor Charles V, and later at the Court of England, where he was knighted by the Crown. It is conceded that an artist of his reputation and position would never have painted a fictitious portrait of the great navigator, and placed the subject's name upon it, nor would it have been passed upon or accepted by any of his associates were it not a good likeness of the subject. Although Columbus had not the halo of heroism and glory around him then that the mantle of subsequent ages has clothed him with, his fame had spread, and when this portrait was executed (a few years after his death) there were many people yet alive who knew him personally. From these facts it will be seen that the idea of Moro painting anything but a correct portrait of Columbus would be in the height of absurdity, placing the artist in the light of an impostor. Moro's life as a master was of the highest standing.

FIFTH.—The Gunther Columbus agrees in every detail with the description of the navigator given by his son Fernando, also with the descriptions published in every standard work on Columbus.

SIXTH.—The allegorical frame in which the portrait is placed embodies one of the most remarkable and exquisite specimens of wood carving known of ancient or modern times. It is beautifully gilded and is allegorical of the life of the discoverer, showing the drums, cannon, Indian arrows and armor of that period, capped with the Columbus coat of arms and its quarterings of oyster shells, swords, ship and anchor, and surmounted by a golden crown. It is carved in wood and is a masterpiece in its design and proportions, and illustrates work such as only royalty could command in that period.

SEVENTH.—The fact that Washington Irving, author and historian, used this portrait for his revised life of Columbus (English edition of 1850) is also evidence that the Gunther Columbus is an authentic one. Irving spent many years at the Court of Spain, had access to all of the public and private libraries and galleries of Europe and passed several years in a research for a satisfactory portrait for this purpose.

EIGHTH.—This is the only portrait of Columbus that has a positive chain of proof regarding its authenticity. Its wonderful execution as a portrait painted on a wood panel, the common custom of ancient times, is a fact worthy of more than ordinary attention, and upon the head of the drum carved in the frame is the date 1590, the year that the portrait was brought into England.

There is, I hear, a prospect that the Frink Reflectors may be applied in the illumination of the Art Galleries of the Columbian Exposition. It is to be hoped, in the interest of the public and of the pictures the public is to see, that this arrangement will be carried out. The Westinghouse Electric Light, and the Frick System of Reflectors, could not but produce an ideal combination in its bearing on the result of bringing up the contents of the galleries to their best possible effect.

GEN. HENRY HETH'S RELICS

GEN. HENRY HETH, an ex-Confederate officer now making his home in Washington, has in his possession, says the Philadelphia Times, the portrait of one of his ancestors, Col. William Heth, formerly a British soldier, and afterwards a colonel in the Revolutionary War. He is dressed in the uniform of Great Britain, and wears upon his breast a medal stamped with the American eagle. During the Civil war this portrait was pierced with sabres by the Union soldiers, and thus, as its owner tells us, bears the marks of three revolutions.

Through this gentleman, who was intimately associated with Washington and other prominent men who figured during that period, many interesting relics have descended to Gen. Heth. Among these is the mace used by the Speaker of the House of Burgesses up to the breaking out of the Revolutionary war, when, all symbols of royalty becoming objectionable, it was laid aside. A few years after the close of the war it was directed by legislative enactment to be sold and the proceeds deposited in the State Treasury, and Col. Heth became its purchaser. Appreciating its historic significance, and aware of the accidents which attend articles of merely metallic value, in order to insure its preservation, Col. Heth had its representative portions transformed into a drinking cup of ample proportions.

The bowl of this cup is five inches in diameter by four in height, and has inscribed in succession around its circumference the following armorial insignia: The arms of the London Company, of Virginia, without supporters, with the motto "En dat Virginia quartam;" the crest of the same, an escutcheon, bearing a female figure standing, holding with her right hand near its pointed head a spear, and leaning with her left upon a shield on which is stamped a human countenance and the inscription, "Virtute et labore florent republica" and a crest complimentary to the last—a falcon passant.

The stem of the goblet is one and one-quarter inches in diameter with moulded ornamentations, and at its juncture with the bowl and base the arms of Great Britain are inscribed. The entire height is seven and one-half inches. The material is silver, the bowl being gilded, but whether originally or by the taste of Col. Heth is not fully authenticated.

Another relic is a silver pendant watch seal with engraved arms and an antique china mug ornamented with colored Chinese figures, gifts of friendship from Gen. Washington to Col. Heth, "a meritorious and trusted officer of the Revolutionary war."

Other mementoes of the Washington family in Gen. Heth's possession are the mahogany writing desk used by Gen. Washington, with a chest of drawers below and a book case above; the dimity curtains which were draped about the bed upon which Mrs. Washington slept, a piece of brocaded yellow silk dress ornamented with bouquets of rich flowers, interspersed with smaller bouquets, worn by Mrs. Washington, a delicate gown of white India muslin profusely embroidered, imported by Gen. Washington for his wife; two quilted undervests, yellow with age, belonging to the General's wardrobe, and a pair of handsome diamond shoe buckles, the property of Gen. Washington.

Other relics are the chamois skin gauntlets worn by President Monroe when inaugurated, and the original manuscript of his inaugural address; the flintlock pistols, the woodwork of which is perforated with holes made by some insect, with which Com. Decatur and Com. Barron fought their famous battle of Bladensburg in 1810, in which the former was killed; the original manuscript of a sermon 140 years old, preached at old St. John's Church, Richmond, and a pair of spectacles belonging to Thomas Jefferson, with a letter from him ordering them from McAllister in Philadelphia and containing a drawing of the same made by himself and minute directions as to size and style.

These glasses, which are heavily framed with silver, are oval in shape and scarcely larger than a ten-cent piece. Other relics are interesting letters from Lafayette and Mrs. Montgomery, whose husband was killed at Quebec, and a Maximilian silver dollar.

The Johnson Club has somewhere discovered an original copy of the Sale Catalogue of Johnson's library, an interesting relic, which is, curiously enough, not to be found in the British Museum or in the Bodleian Library. The title-page announces that the "valuable library and books of the late learned Samuel Johnson, Esq., LL.D., will be sold by Christie, by the order of the executors, at his great room, Pall Mall, Wednesday, February 16, 1785, and the three following days." The library consisted of 662 lots and realized only £247 9s. Johnson, however, had presented or bequeathed many of his most valuable books to friends, and ten persons were authorized by will to take each a book at their election.